



Photo by Rick McComb

Empowering global learners

Kitty Nadeau, a teacher at Wilder Elementary (Jefferson County) and a Hong Kong native, uses dolls to teach Chinese words to primary students. While students in China begin learning English in third grade, Wilder Elementary is the only public elementary school in Kentucky offering Chinese language instruction.

Gov. Fletcher appoints new state board members

Gov. Ernie Fletcher recently made five appointments to the Kentucky Board of Education and reappointed R. Keith Travis of Marshall County, current board chair. The new appointees are the Rev. C.B. Akins Sr. of Fayette County, Kay Baird of Pikeville, Wilburn "Joe" Brothers of Elizabethtown, Jeanne H. Ferguson of Louisville and John Douglas Hubbard of Bardstown. They will join the board at the June meeting, and their terms will expire in 2010.

Gail W. Wells, provost of Northern Kentucky University, was appointed to represent the Sixth Supreme Court District on the board, but later declined the appointment. At press time, no one had been named for that position.

The 12-member board is comprised of 11 voting members appointed to four-year terms by the governor and one non-voting member, the president of the Council for Postsecondary Education. Tom Layzell is the non-voting member.

Board members represent all geographic regions. Seven members represent the state's Supreme Court districts, and four represent the state at large.

"Each of the appointees offers a wealth of experience, knowledge, ideas and leadership skills. These appointees bring with them a combined total of more than 180 years of experience in the classroom

or education-related activities," Gov. Fletcher said.

Akins is pastor of First Baptist Bracktown in Lexington. His church participates in the Adopt-A-School program of the African-American Educational Coalition. Members of the congregation mentor students at Leestown Middle School, help monitor testing, assist on field trips and offer assistance to students at the school.

He earned a bachelor's degree in social work with honors from the University of Kentucky and both a master's of divinity and doctor of ministry from Lexington Theological Seminary. He served in the U.S. Air Force as a multilingual interpreter and later taught foreign languages in the military intelligence division of the U.S. Army Reserves. Akins has studied eight languages.

He has served on several other boards, including the Fayette Educational Foundation Board of Directors, One Community One Voice Board of Directors and the University of Kentucky President's Commission on Diversity.

Baird taught for many years in the Clark County school system and served for six years as a member of the Pikeville Independent Board of Education. She earned a bachelor's degree in Eng-

See **GOVERNOR** on Page 10

Chinese educator develops KVHS language course

By Cathy Lindsey

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Kentucky's middle and high school students will have the opportunity to learn Mandarin Chinese next school year. A new online Chinese language course is being piloted this semester and will be offered through the Kentucky Virtual High School (KVHS) beginning in August.

"China's presence in the world economy is growing incredibly," said Terri DeYong, a senior consultant in the Kentucky Department of Education's Division of Secondary and Virtual Learning, "and Kentucky needs to globalize our outlook on the economy."

Kentucky policymakers agree that it's crucial for Kentucky schools to expand their studies in Chinese. In fact, last May, Gov. Ernie Fletcher signed an economic and education agreement with Jiangxi province in China.

Also, the Kentucky Department of Education has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Chinese Minis-

try of Education. The agreement provided to Kentucky a visiting Chinese teacher to help create a virtual Chinese language course and help expand Chinese language and cultural professional development activities statewide.

Jing (Jane) Zhao joined the Department of Education in September 2005 to design Kentucky's Chinese language and culture program. International Education grants from the Longview Foundation and the Asia Society are funding her stay.

Zhao is a national award-winning middle school geography teacher in China and a part-time university professor there. She was trained to teach the Chinese language through the National Office of Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language in Beijing.

Online language course

Zhao has spent the past six months with the KVHS designing the online language course. Enrollment will be open to all middle and high school students in

See **CHINESE** on Page 9

New classroom assessments will give teachers feedback on student learning

By Cathy Lindsey

cathy.lindsey@education.ky.gov

Who knows better what teachers need in the classroom than teachers? That's why the Kentucky Department of Education and the Kentucky Board of Education look to Kentucky teachers throughout the state for input and feedback in designing components of the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) and other instructional resources.

Kentucky teachers are at it again. This time, Kentucky educators are helping design diagnostic assessments for higher-level mathematics courses.

The Secondary Learning Alliance for Mathematics Achievement represents a learning community of five Kentucky school districts. Mathematics teachers from Elizabethtown Independent, Jessamine County, Oldham County, Shelby County and Warren County have joined together to design diagnostic assessments for Algebra I, Algebra II and Geometry.

"The assessments are a vital part of reforming high schools and moving the emphasis to an individualized instruc-

tional approach for students," said Paul Upchurch, superintendent of Oldham County Schools.

In the summer of 2004, Kentucky Com-

See **NEW** on Page 10

What's Inside

| | |
|--|----|
| Education in China has implications for Kentucky | 3 |
| Senior projects: Two students focus on sports medicine | 4 |
| PD workshops for arts and health/PE..... | 5 |
| Teacher of the Year nominations open..... | 6 |
| Schools prepare students for engineering field | 7 |
| Instruction-enhanced with culture and history-benefits students..... | 8 |
| News for education leaders | 11 |

Bulletin Board



Photo by Rick McComb

Bulletin Board is compiled by Joy Barr
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Conferences

Early Childhood Institute

The Kentucky Early Childhood Summer Institute is June 12-14 in Lexington.
Contact: Phyllis Hall, (502) 839-2513, phall@anderson.k12.ky.us

Kentucky Child Now!

The third annual conference of Kentucky Child Now! will be July 12-14 in Louisville. Students, ages 13-19, are encouraged to submit artwork by April 30 for the Creative Youth Expo.
www.kychildnow.org

History Education Conference

The Kentucky History Education Conference is set for July 20 in Frankfort. "Reading, Writing and History" will include sessions that demonstrate how to integrate literacy and history instruction.
For more information or a registration form, contact Vicky Middleswarth at (502) 564-1792, vicky.middleswarth@ky.gov.

KATH

The Kentucky Association of Teachers of History (KATH) will meet Sept. 30 at Northern Kentucky University.
Contact: Alana Cain Scott, (606) 783-2540, a.scott@moreheadstate.edu
www.kyhistoryteachers.org

KASC

The Kentucky Association of School Councils will meet Sept. 20-21 in Louisville.
www.kasc.net

Kentucky Reading Association

The Kentucky Reading Association has issued a call for presenters for its annual conference, Sept. 21-23 in Louisville. Proposals to present should emphasize "Learning, Leading, and Living Literacy" and be submitted by May 31.
Contact: Brenda Overturf, KRA conference chair, (502) 852-3976, brenda.overturf@louisville.edu

Events

Teacher Appreciation

National Teacher Day will be celebrated May 4, during National Teacher Appreciation Week, May 1-7.
www.nea.org/teacherday

Child abuse prevention

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. For statewide resources and information promoting child abuse awareness, visit www.pcaky.org.

Kentucky Down Under

Kentucky Down Under, Kentucky's Australian-themed animal park has special events planned throughout the spring. Group rates are available for 15 or more.
To schedule a field trip, visit www.kdu.com.

Celebrate Earth Day

Earth Day is April 22, a part of the Earth Week celebration, April 18-22.
www.earthday.net

Energy tour for educators

Teachers can learn more about energy in Kentucky by visiting both renewable and nonrenewable energy sites during the annual energy tour for Kentucky educators, June 12-16. The tour will focus on energy in Eastern Kentucky.
To request an application, contact Karen Reagor at (866) 736-8941, kreagor@need.org.
www.kentuckyawake.org

Lexington Children's Theatre

The Lexington Children's Theatre presents "Alexander, who's not, not, not, not, not, not Going to Move," based on the book by Judith Viorst, on April 24-28, May 1-5 and May 9-12. Recommended for grades K-4.
Contact: Box office, (859) 254-4546
www.lctonstage.org

'Kentucky Adventures'

Fort Harrod State Park and the Harrodsburg (Independent) High School Department of Drama present "Kentucky Adventures" April 17-May 19. The 40-minute interactive play is about Kentucky history, both real and legend. To schedule a class trip, call Joan Huffman at (859) 734-3314, joan.huffman@ky.gov.
<http://parks.ky.gov/stateparks/fh/index.htm>

Math & Science Days

Math & Science Days are May 12 and May 17 at Paramount's Kings Island near Cincinnati. The theme park is transformed both days into a learning lab for students and teachers. Classroom materials are available online.
www2.paramountparks.com/kingsisland/events/events_education_days.cfm

Idea of America essay contest

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) invites all high school juniors to enter the 2006 Idea of America essay contest. The author of the winning essay on The First Amendment will receive \$5,000. Deadline for entries is April 19.
www.wethepeople.gov/essay

History writing contest

The Kentucky Association of Teachers of History (KATH) is holding a competition for the best research paper on any history-related topic written by a Kentucky high school student during the 2005-2006 academic year. Entries must be postmarked by June 1.
For guidelines, contact Lonnie Lewis at (502) 695-2627, lonnie.lewis@franklin.ky Starfish program artwork

2006 All-USA Teacher Team

USA Today is accepting nominations for the 2006 All-USA Teacher Team, a recognition program for outstanding K-12 teachers. Nomination deadline is April 29.
<http://allstars.usatoday.com>

Commissioner's Comments

Education in China has implications for Kentucky schools

By Gene Wilhoit

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This issue of *Kentucky Teacher* may seem like “the China issue” because of articles about Jing (Jane) Zhao, who is developing a Chinese language course for the Kentucky Virtual High School, and Hopkins County social studies teacher Libby Gooch who worked with Chinese educators on a recent trip to that country. There is also a photo of primary students at Wilder Elementary in Jefferson County learning to speak Chinese.

Why so many references to a country on the other side of the world? If you heard Willard Daggett speak at the Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference in March or have read Thomas L. Friedman's book, “The World is Flat,” you're aware of how China's ambitious education plan will impact the future of Kentucky students as they compete for jobs in the global work place.

Kentucky teachers and administrators need to be aware of how intentional this state is in its pursuit of a world-class education for all students. Our schools must continue the work they have been given by education reform. However, our schools also must pick up the pace in preparing students with skills they need to compete in a global age.

Last fall, I was part of an education delegation that traveled to China for seven days. Our purpose was to see first-hand the educational developments in China and to explore what those developments mean for our country — and our states.

It was a fantastic opportunity to see the country and experience the culture. It was even more intriguing to learn how this country of 1.3 billion people is working to eradicate illiteracy and bring universal education to all children.

Two Chinas

China is a country of contrasts. It is as modern in certain places as any country in the world. In Shanghai, I saw signs across the city's modern skyline advertising every major corporation in the world.

Yet, just a short ride into the countryside, I saw people selling food from baskets on the side of the road. They shared their homes with farm animals. They used hand tools to work their fields.

The contrast is the same in education. Basic literacy for all children has not been achieved yet in China. The country has a goal to move universal education to the masses by 2020. Currently, only 40 percent of Chinese students go to school more than nine years.

Right now, most children in urban areas go to school — some in residential settings, some not. It's not unusual for children to go to public boarding schools as early as kindergarten.

In the rural areas, all children do not

have access to school. When they do, the facilities often are not the best. Students may not have textbooks or other resources, and their teachers may be ill-prepared for the classroom.

Because education is seen as the salvation for the country and individuals, parents do everything in their power to

directed: the teacher lectures to classes of as many as 60 students. But because of pressures to succeed and strong parental support, you just don't see discipline problems despite the large class sizes.

Most teachers are women, although I did see more male teachers at the high school level. They have fewer classes and

Chinese education officials say their students are getting as good a grounding in content as American students. What they really want to discover is how they can develop in their students the initiative, intuitiveness and creativity that exists in the American mind.

I believe American ingenuity and creative thought are more byproducts of our society rather than something we teach in schools. Until the Chinese society becomes less centralized and controlling, I don't think that country will be able to make much headway in this area.

Lessons learned

Are there lessons to be learned from the Chinese? Yes, but I don't think we need to dramatically change what we're doing in Kentucky schools. The implications for our work seem focused on the rigor of our curriculum — especially in world languages and science — and our national, state and local commitment to education.

I saw more rigor in the Chinese curriculum. Students were focused and engaged in time on task. However, I believe it is right for Kentucky schools to continue to emphasize involvement of our students in problem-solving, critical-thinking and higher-level skills in the classroom.

The Kentucky Board of Education recognizes the need for our students to acquire world language proficiency. The language exchange partnerships Kentucky has established and the online Chinese course are first steps to preparing our students for dialogue in the global arena.

We also must increase the rigor of our middle and high school science curriculum. We must look to programs like Project Lead the Way to interest students in engineering and higher-level mathematics studies. (See Page 7.)

To accomplish these things, we first must find solutions for the education issues Kentuckians have been debating for 20 years: Should we have standards? Should we have high expectations for all students? At what level should we fund education?

While we're spending time and energy on these issues to educate 656,500 students, China is going forward with its education plan for 250 million students. China is serious about using education to move that nation from a low-wage manufacturer to a world-class leader in a wide range of professions.

Kentucky educators cannot afford to sit around for another decade or two wondering if there is going to be a different world out there. That different world is upon us, and we must renew our efforts to provide a world-class education for all Kentucky students.

(To comment on this topic, contact the commissioner at gene.wilhoit@education.ky.gov.)



Snapshots taken during Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit's trip to China last fall show classroom activities and historic sites the education delegation, lower right photo, experienced.

support their children's education. Even parents in poverty save to invest in education for their children.

Pressure — either positive or negative — is on children to work hard and become part of the top 5 percent to 10 percent of students who attend “elite” high schools. At these schools, students have access to the most rigorous education and opportunities to attend the “elite” universities. In 2004, only 19 percent (about 20 million) of the high school graduates went on to post-secondary education.

Inside Chinese schools

The Chinese public school experience tends to follow a European model. Students must pass exams to move from elementary school to high school to university studies. Success or failure on those exams determines where a student goes in the future. The message is clear: Only the successful go to a good university, get a good job and live a good life.

Students are in class about 8.5 hours a day with breaks only for meals and exercise. They also attend evening study sessions. Boys and girls have equal challenges and equal opportunities in Chinese schools, but seem to be separated on a social context.

Classroom instruction is very teacher-

much more planning time than their American counterparts.

The Chinese schools give a lot of responsibility to master teachers — schools also have principals — to lead the schools and guide the instruction of other teachers. Teachers and principals also work where the government places them, not necessarily where they want to teach.

As for curriculum, the major difference between American and Chinese schools is the emphasis on world language and science instruction. Chinese students begin learning English in the third grade and must pass an English competency test to enter high school.

Physics and chemistry are the basis for the science curriculum in Chinese middle and high schools. Students in the “elite” schools take multiple years of physics. Most Chinese students don't take biology and earth science — which are the emphasis in the American curriculum — until completing physics and chemistry studies.

Chinese students who go on to the university level continue a very rigorous science curriculum. The universities most often are research centers attached to government-owned science parks that develop products from the university research.

Illustration by Rick McComb

Senior projects provide practical experiences for students during final year of high school

By Joy Barr

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A growing number of Kentucky high schools are using senior projects to motivate and challenge students during their final year. The senior project lets a student choose a topic of personal interest and spend time studying it in depth.

Teachers and administrators

say students develop good time-management skills, independent study habits and an ability to meet high standards for work during the senior project. That's because three fundamental principles guide senior project programs:

- Every student must be engaged in a rigorous course of study that leads to postsecond-

ary studies and work-place readiness upon graduation.

- Every student's educational experience must be guided by an individualized plan for lifelong learning and supported by relevant learning opportunities.

- Every student must be engaged in ongoing, meaningful relationships with educators and other caring adults who place

highest priority on helping each student reach his or her learning goals.

After consulting with their advisors, seniors spend a predetermined time each week on their projects. Students are required to complete a weekly journal that accounts for time, explains what the student accomplished and offers reflection on the work.

Students can do research on or off campus by working with professionals in their fields of interest. To demonstrate what they learn, students may participate in a Senior Project Fair, develop a Web site to display the work on their project, or make a final, formal presentation of the project to the school's senior project committee.

Two seniors focus on sports medicine

North Oldham High School (Oldham County) already offers a challenging and rigorous curriculum for all students, including Advanced Placement courses in science, mathematics, English, world language and social studies. In an effort to make the senior year more meaningful, personalized, yet rigorous and productive, the school began offering the senior project program during the 2004-2005 school year.

Seniors Sarah Cooley and Kristine Mattern are among approximately 50 students pursuing senior projects this year in one of four areas: scientific, historical, community service or self-improvement. The two girls are serving as student athletic trainers at North Oldham High.

Sarah and Kristine volunteer with the athletic program five days a week and are receiving class

credit as part of their senior project. Students at the school are required to devote at least 350 minutes a week to their senior projects. Seniors formally present their senior project work to an evaluation panel before the end of the school year.

Sarah is a starter on the girls' basketball team, and Kristine is a member of the girls' soccer and basketball teams. Both girls are honor students. They expect to study physical therapy in college.

"I've always been interested in physical therapy and medicine, and this was a way to get involved with that," said Sarah. "You get to explore things you cannot learn in a normal classroom setting."

Jamie Furlong, a certified ath-

letic trainer, is guiding Sarah and Kristine through their senior projects in sports medicine. Furlong is employed by Baptist Northeast Hospital in LaGrange and serves as the high school's athletic trainer for varsity sports. She also provides physical therapy for any injured athletes.

Furlong said that working with the athletes and student trainers "has been a wonderful educational experience for me. I constantly am learning how students learn best and how to relate to each student. I want to make a difference in the lives of (all) these students."

Furlong has been able to provide the two student trainers

game duties that include helping athletes stretch muscles, removing tape and applying ice treatments to injuries.

They are present when Furlong does evaluations of injuries as well. "I make sure they are there as much as possible with the evaluations, and I let them do their own semi-evaluations," Furlong said. "There's a lot of hands-on, which hopefully will help them be a step ahead in college when they start their physical therapy programs."

The student trainers also work with team physician Stacie Grossfeld. Flexible class scheduling allows them to do research for their

senior projects on and off campus. They have been able to observe surgeries, including an Achilles tendon repair and a hip replacement. Grossfeld has taken an active role in the school's senior project program, serving as a mentor to both Sarah and Kristine.

"Anytime they have questions, they can e-mail the doctor," Furlong said. "She has been very open about discussing things with them, which is really nice. They always have a lot of questions. It's been great to work with them because they all want to learn."

The two seniors also are under Furlong's watch during classroom studies that are preparing them for what they will study in

"You get to explore things you cannot learn in a normal classroom setting."

Sarah Cooley

North Oldham High School Senior

with plenty of hands-on experience. "I honestly don't know how I did it by myself before they came in," Furlong said. Sarah and Kristine help by taping injuries before practices and games, and assisting other student athletes with stretching exercises.

The seniors agree that they have had their eyes opened since starting to work.

"Probably the biggest thing is how much I have learned so quickly by doing it," said Kristine. "There's a lot of responsibility; a lot of things you don't normally think about."

Their duties include taping injuries, helping athletes stretch injured muscles and managing schedules for whirlpool therapy. They also staff home and away sporting events and handle post-



Photo by Rick McComb

North Oldham High School athletic trainer Jamie Furlong, center, watches as Sarah Cooley applies what she's learned about sports injuries by wrapping the wrist of Kristine Mattern.

college and use in their careers. The class has proved to be as tough as any of the AP classes they take during their normal school day, the girls said.

They just finished learning the bones in the human skeletal system for the class. After a test on the bones, they will move on to the muscle system. "Learning about the human anatomy is very challenging," said Sarah.

"Jamie is a tough teacher, but a good one," Kristine said.

"In order to understand injuries, they need to know all the bones and muscles and how they

all work together," Furlong said. "Once they learn the overall stuff, then we will really start to get into studying specific injuries and how to treat them."

The senior projects are gaining attention at North Oldham High. Furlong said she has already had interest from students who want to work with her next year.

Contact: Jamie Furlong at North Oldham High School, (502) 228-0158, jamie.furlong@oldham.kyschools.us

Design your own arts PD at annual Faubush retreat

This summer the Kentucky Arts Council (KAC) once again offers educators and parents the annual Design Your Own Professional Development retreat. This unique opportunity allows participants to select from a variety of workshops that address arts and cultural connections through Kentucky's core content, which has been recently revised.

The July 18-20 event will benefit elementary and middle school arts and humanities teachers, arts specialists, social studies teachers, classroom generalists, special education teachers, language arts teachers, library media specialists, parent coordinators and FRYSC directors. It is designed to help any educator or parent interested in teaching the arts through cultures and cultures through the arts.

Participants can immerse themselves in hands-on cultural arts experiences led by professional working artists who also teach in school settings through

the KAC Teacher Initiated Program. Participants receive 12 to 16 hours of professional development credit by attending plenary sessions and four breakout workshops of their choosing. They may, for example, choose to study one arts discipline across several cultures, or they may study four diverse disciplines through one culture.

This year's emphasis will be on making arts and cultural connections using the revised core content. All workshop presenters have received training in implementing the new Arts and Humanities Core Content from the Kentucky Department of Education.

Among the offerings are West African Adinkra printing and West African dance, Appalachian basket making and Appalachian dulcimer music, Latin dance and Latin murals, and puppetry and sculpture from diverse cultures. While some workshops are popular repeats,

many are brand new, including a number of multidisciplinary workshops.

In addition to hands-on learning experiences, participants will acquire new ways of engaging students in experiencing and responding to the elements of arts as expressed in diverse cultures.

The retreat takes place July 18-20 at the Kentucky Leadership Center near Faubush (Pulaski County). The \$240 registration fee per participant includes lodging, meals, snacks and resource materials. When teaching team members enroll together, subsequent enrollees receive a \$10 discount.

Links to retreat information and online registration will be posted on the KAC Web site (on the homepage and on the "Arts Education" homepage) at www.artsCouncil.ky.gov after April 15. Space is limited. Registration closes June 1.



Photo by Rick McComb

A community 'Reading Gala'

Retired minister Fred Moffatt of Shelbyville leads a discussion of Harry M. Caudill's book "Night Comes to the Cumberlands" with students at Shelby County High School during the February Reading Gala. Adults from the community, teachers and district officials each selected a book to discuss with a group of senior English students, who had several weeks to read the book and were graded on their participation in the discussion. Twenty-five adults and 156 students participated in what school librarian Julie Webb called "a successful beginning to creating a community of readers at the school."

Students can learn to control bullies

By Matt Buckman

Kentucky Center for School Safety

Bullying and aggression among students are persistent problems in schools throughout Kentucky and the nation. Research shows these behaviors are harmful not only to the victim; they also affect the bully, bystanders and a school's climate.

Bullying and aggression can lower academic achievement, reduce students' self-esteem and create safety concerns while increasing other social and emotional problems among students, according to the Kentucky Center for School Safety. However, there are steps Kentucky public school educators can take to increase positive student interaction and decrease bullying and aggression, Center officials say.

Research shows adults simply are not "present" when much of the bullying takes place on playgrounds, on buses and in schools. For this reason, schools must motivate students to help one another recognize and stop these behaviors.

Educators need to teach students what appropriate behavior is in the school culture and how to take action as bystanders to prevent bullying and support the victims, said Doris Settles,

Clearinghouse coordinator for the Center for School Safety. Most students are sympathetic toward the victims of bullying and would like to help them. However, they often fear that if they get involved, they will be the next victims, she added.

To help students be effective in stopping bullies, the Center for School Safety recommends that educators teach students:

- what behaviors are positive and appropriate
- how to control the emotions they feel
- how to remain empathetic when bullying behaviors are exhibited

Incorporating lessons on bullying and peer aggression in the regular curriculum can help teachers address the issues, Settles said. She offers examples of classroom activities that teachers can prepare for students:

- Mathematics: Use word problems that involve someone being bullied and offer the correct actions to take against aggression.
- English/Language Arts: Find age-appropriate literature that contains character-building themes. Select stories with themes that show negative outcomes for people who bully or

hurt others.

- Writing: Ask students to write about how a victim feels and what students should do to help.

• Drama: Have students perform skits about being bullied. Students can demonstrate the correct methods of intervention, controlling emotions, being assertive, talking to or including the victim, and telling an adult.

• Social Studies/History: Have students report on historical figures that have been bullied. Students can discuss how other people helped the person overcome the bullying.

• Science: Discuss how a school of fish works together to protect any member from getting hurt when threatened by a predator. Apply this lesson to students' lives through activities like presentations, role-playing, drawing or writing.

• Physical Education: Teach students to control their emotions through deep-breathing exercises, muscle relaxation, visualization and counting.

For more information about bullying prevention, visit the Center's Web site at www.kysafeschools.org. Enter "bullying" in the "Find It" box in the left-hand menu and click.

SHAPE Institute for health/PE teachers

The SHAPE (Student Health and Physical Education) Institute offers content-specific professional development for Kentucky physical education and health teachers July 10-14 at Clay County High School in Manchester.

During a pre-conference session on July 10, teachers can become certified to teach archery through the Archery in the Schools program. Registration for the event is \$60.

SHAPE Institute, held July 11 and 12, will explore "Shaping the Attitude and Lifestyles of Kentucky Youth." Registration for the two-day event is \$100.

Focus sessions will be held for elementary teachers and secondary teachers. Jim Tackett, a Kentucky Department of Education consultant, will lead a session on the Kentucky Core Content for Assessment, Version 4.0, and depth of knowledge (DOK) levels.

Sessions will be available on health topics such as wellness policies, asthmatic and diabetic

students, nutrition, eating disorders and stress management. Participants also can take part in sessions on archery, tennis for all, adaptive PE, and injuries and sports medicine.

Speakers include former UK basketball player Jeff Shepherd; coaches Donnie Gray and Bobby Keith; Jill Day, former All-State tennis stand-out; occupational therapist Leslie Sizemore; physical therapist Paige Daly; and Colby Wagoner from Save the Children.

The Union College coaching staff will conduct a clinic for basketball coaches on July 13 and a clinic for volleyball coaches on July 14. Registration for each clinic is \$50, or \$80 for both clinics.

To download a registration form or register online, go to www.clay.k12.ky.us. Deadline for registration is July 1.

For more information, contact Deann Allen, Clay County Schools, (606) 598-2168, deann.allen@clay.kyschools.us.

Nominations open for 2007 Kentucky Teacher Awards

Nominations are now open for the 2007 Kentucky Teacher Awards, sponsored by the Kentucky Department of Education and Ashland Inc. Any full-time Kentucky public school teacher with at least three years of experience is eligible.

Students or their parents, teaching peers, principals, superintendents or anyone from the community who has an interest in honoring an outstanding educator can submit a nomination for the awards program. The deadline for nominations is May 1.

Nomination forms are available on the Kentucky Department of Education's Web site at www.education.ky.gov (type in "Teacher of the Year" in the keyword/search box) or by visiting Ashland's Web site at www.ashland.com and clicking on the "Education" link within the "Communities" section.

All nominated teachers are required to complete a written application, which must be submitted by June 30. A blue ribbon panel of education professionals

from around the state will serve as judges for the 2007 program in July. Up to 24 Ashland Inc. Teacher Achievement Award winners will be announced in August.

Following site visits with nine semifinalists in September and personal interviews with the top three candidates, the Kentucky Teacher of the Year will be announced in Frankfort. Teacher Achievement Award winners will receive a cash gift of \$500. Two of the three finalists will receive a cash gift of \$3,000, and the Teacher of the Year will receive a cash prize of \$10,000, along with an exciting professional development opportunity. The Kentucky Teacher of the Year then will represent the state in the National Teacher of the Year competition.

The Kentucky Teacher Awards program combines the best elements of the Ashland Inc. Teacher Achievement Awards and the Kentucky Teacher of the Year programs. This is the sixth year for this innovative collaboration between private industry and public education.

7 districts share \$16 million grant

Seven Kentucky school districts will share a five-year \$16 million federal grant to improve the reading achievement of middle and high school students. Only eight Striving Readers grants were awarded throughout the nation.

The districts participating in the Striving Readers grant are Danville Independent, Eminence Independent and Bullitt, Jessamine, Pike, Rowan and Washington counties. The grant will target struggling readers at 23 middle and high schools.

"It's a great opportunity to get specific help for those students who are reading two years or more below grade level," said Kathy Belcher, a grant writer for Danville Independent Schools and primary writer for the successful Striving Readers grant.

Striving Readers is a U.S. Department of Education program that supports new reading initiatives or expands existing ones. The program aims to improve the quality of literacy instruction, provide intensive "literacy interventions" for struggling adolescent readers and help build a scientific research base to identify what

strategies effectively improve reading.

Jessamine County, for example, will hire literacy coaches to work with students in two middle schools, two high schools and Providence alternative school, according to Superintendent Lu Young.

The literacy coaches will spend part of their time working directly with struggling readers to bring their skills up to grade level. The rest of the time, coaches will collaborate with classroom teachers to implement strategies to help students read in core content classes, Young said.

About half of the 23 schools will start the program in the 2006-2007 academic year, and the other half will start the following year, said Amy Awbrey, design and research coordinator for the Collaborative for Teaching and Learning, a Louisville-based nonprofit organization that assists school districts.

The University of Kentucky's Collaborative Center for Literacy Development will evaluate the effectiveness of the methods used to improve reading. The University of Louisville will assist in professional development for teachers.

Corrections

A story in the March 2006 issue of *Kentucky Teacher* did not contain the complete list of the minimum high school graduation requirements in social studies that was approved at the February Kentucky Board of Education meeting.

Beginning with the graduating class of 2012, students will be required to have three social studies credits to graduate. Those three credits are to include the content strands of historical perspective, including U.S. history, economics, government and civics, geography, and cultures and societies.

Information provided under a photograph in the March 2006 issue of *Kentucky Teacher* contained incorrect information about an Algebra II class at Male High School in Jefferson County. It is an Excel Algebra II class.

American idols from the past

A living timeline of nearly 80 American musicians was part of Elkhorn Middle School's (Franklin County) sixth annual celebration of the visual arts and music. During the nine-week "Footsteps to Freedom" unit, sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade art students created projects such as story quilts, paintings, sculptures, a freedom wall and a recreation of the two Jima statue to answer the question, "What does freedom mean to you?"

Eighth-grade choir students selected and researched a musician, then created a costume and backdrop for a "wax museum" exhibit of American music legends. Students at Elkhorn toured the art exhibit and music timeline during the day. In the evening, parents and community members attended the art show and a program of gospel and spiritual music performed by choir students and an area church choir to celebrate Black History Month.

Brandon Jennels is a psychedelic flashback from the 1960s while portraying Jimi Hendrix in the Elkhorn Middle music timeline.

Photos by Rick McComb



Molly Davis poses as Patsy Cline before a replica of the Grand Ole Opry stage and information she researched about the singer's life.



Lyndon McKee surrounds himself with memorabilia from the music career of Ray Charles as part of his music history project.

Schools prepare students for engineering field

By Cathy Lindsey

cathy.lindsey@education.ky.gov

The message to educators is being delivered loud and clear at both the national and state levels: At a time when technology is constantly reinventing itself, the United States has a critical shortage of engineers and well-educated technicians. Studies show that American universities simply can't graduate enough qualified engineers.

The problem is not that too few students are interested, according to the studies. The problem is that too many students can't complete the rigorous programs required to enter these fields. According to the American Society for Engineering Education, more than 40 percent of students who declare engineering as their college major will not complete the degree work.

In an effort to address this problem, eight Kentucky high schools have implemented Project Lead The Way (PLTW) into their curriculum. This national pre-engineering program fosters partnerships between high schools and universities to develop in students the mathematics and science skills needed to succeed in college or technical school.

"The program advocates a rigorous and relevant curriculum," said Rodney Kelly, director of the Division of Career and Technical Education in the Kentucky Department of Education. "It provides a system for schools to use to teach a high-level curriculum and offers professional development for teacher support."

The project-based curriculum challenges students of all ability levels to use mathematics and scientific and technological principles in solving real-world problems. Students in the program take college-level courses while still in high school.

Students are involved in projects that can range from design briefs to reverse engineering, bridge building and testing, stress analysis, hydraulics and basic robotics. Students may design projects such as catapults, puzzle cubes, marble sorters and bridges as part of their course work.

"Project Lead The Way provides applications of high-level mathematics and science courses to real-world practices," Kelly said. "This can help more high school students be successful when they go to postsecondary to study engineering."

For example, Harrison County PLTW students used industry-based software to design and test bridge structures. Carpentry students at the Harrison County Area Technology Center took the student designs and built a 40-foot bridge, said Harrison County PLTW instructor Roger Hurst. Currently, Harrison County students are working

"Part of our strategy is to make sure the right courses are being offered."

PLTW classes are modeled after introductory engineering courses taught at the university level. The curriculum is structured for college-bound high school students and technical school students. The program begins with principles of



Photo by Rick McComb

Rockcastle County High School student Jesse McCauley checks the circuitry on a piece of electronic equipment while Melinda Thomason watches.

on a pirate ship model that will be used as a playground item, he said.

Any high school student who is enrolled in a college preparatory mathematics course is eligible to enroll in the PLTW pre-engineering program of study. It is possible for a student to receive college credit for some of the courses at some of Kentucky's postsecondary institutions.

In fact, the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) is working with universities across the state to get more middle and high school students interested in careers in engineering and engineering technology.

"We recognize that producing quality engineers in Kentucky is important to the economic development of our state," said Jim Applegate, vice president for Academic Affairs at CPE.

engineering in ninth grade and increases in difficulty. By the twelfth grade, PLTW students can take engineering design, digital electronics and manufacturing classes.

"Students gain first-hand experience in different facets of engineering and discover where their strengths lie," said Patrick Greene, PLTW instructor at Rockcastle County High School.

Harrison County High School PLTW instructor Hurst agrees. "Once a student finds his or her area, we see their interest in school, especially mathematics and science, increase."

He reports that recent data taken from the 2004 High Schools That Work assessment reflects that Harrison County students participating in PLTW score 15 to 30 points higher in the areas of mathematics, science and reading than students

not enrolled in PLTW classes.

Moreover, statewide data shows that Kentucky students enrolled in PLTW are scoring significantly higher in mathematics and science on the Kentucky Core Content Tests (KCCT) than other students in their schools, according to Kelly. These assessments are given each spring as part of the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS).

The PLTW courses require students to find problems, figure out the mathematics and science needed to solve the problem, make drawings of the solution and build it. The courses also introduce students who may be unsure what they want to do with their lives to an exciting career option, Greene said.

"Currently, there are more engineering and engineering technology jobs in the United States than trained people to fill them," said Henry Lacy, a state PLTW leader. "That's why it's important to use middle and high schools to provide a pipeline for students to enter postsecondary engineering and engineering technology programs."

Kelly agrees. Project Lead The Way demonstrates a direct link from secondary education to postsecondary studies. "Students know they are preparing for postsecondary education in this field," he said.

"The students are gaining in two areas," Rockcastle County instructor Greene said. "One is the application of mathematics and science. The other is what to expect from college-level courses. Through this program they are learning the important life skills of long-term projects, team-building concepts and creating a work portfolio, many of which may be new to the students."

Professional Development

PLTW requires that teachers in the program go through rigorous training before ever entering the classroom.

"The PLTW training helps

me to be better prepared as a teacher," Greene said. "The three stages of teacher training help all instructors to start off correctly."

First, teachers must undergo an online assessment of their skills and technical knowledge. This helps determine strengths and weaknesses. Teachers then can update their skills before the summer training program begins.

The Summer Training Institute is the second phase of the teacher training. This is an intense two-week training session in which the teacher goes through a fast-track version of each course in the program. It helps bring teachers up to speed in areas where they're weak and advances their knowledge in the areas where they're stronger, Greene explained.

The summer courses are held at a university and are led by a college professor and an experienced secondary classroom teacher. This gives teachers the advantage of having been a student, Greene explained. Upon completion of the institute, teachers are ready for the classroom.

Ongoing training is the third stage. This is provided via the Internet to instructors during the school year to support their classroom efforts. Teachers can update their skills as needed.

The Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education is currently seeking funding to help implement PLTW in more schools throughout the state. This would include providing matching funds for schools willing to invest in the program and supporting the summer institute for teachers at universities in Kentucky.

For more information on Project Lead The Way, go online at www.pltw.org or contact Henry Lacy or Larry Helphinstine, PLTW state coordinators, at (502) 564-3472 or lacy@education.ky.gov or larry.helphinstine@education.ky.gov.

Current Project Lead The Way Participants

Franklin County High School
Harrison County High School
Henderson County High School
Jeffersontown High School Magnet Career Academy
Morgan County High School
Nelson County High School
Rockcastle County High School
Trigg County High School

A growing number of schools in Kentucky are reviewing the PLTW curriculum and planning to implement the program in coming years.

Instruction—enhanced with culture and history—benefits Hanson Elementary fifth graders

By Joy Barr

joy.barr@education.ky.gov

Libby Gooch's fifth-grade students at Hanson Elementary have learned a lot about history through hands-on classroom activities and through Gooch's travels to historic places near and far. Her creativity and commitment to teaching American history at the Hopkins County school were instrumental factors in her being named Kentucky's American History Teacher of the Year for 2004-2005 by the Gilder Lehrman Institute, which promotes the study of American history.

"Libby has an obvious enthusiasm and dedication for teaching American history," said Carrie Dowdy, state coordinator for the Kentucky American History Teacher of the Year program.

"I try to make history relevant to my students by making local connections through the study of historical markers, battle sites, field trips and presenting historical facts that happened close to home," she said.

For example, her students recently researched and designed a time-lined walk through American history from the days of the Native Americans through the Civil War. Students displayed what they learned from their research and created collections from each era for display in the "Hansonian American History Museum."

The "Museum" was the culminating event of that history project. Students served as tour guides to other students, parents, visitors and teachers from other district schools. Students dressed in costumes of the researched time periods and explained their particular project to the visitors. This collection of history gave the Hopkins County students experiences that have helped them understand and remember valuable information, concepts and procedures about this country's history.

Gooch also enjoys traveling, especially to historical sites. She recently returned from a visit to China and brought back new learning opportunities for her students from her trip. She likes to broaden

gives students more in-depth knowledge, and they can visit American history on a personal level through interesting chapter books. Students can make connections with the character of the story and connections to real-life experiences," she added.

Gooch's students are active participants in their learning rather than passive listeners. "They are encouraged to be creative and share knowledge, skills and specific talents in group work or on an individual level," said Gooch.

The Hanson Elementary "family" works as a team to ensure that each of the more than 500 K-5 students is constantly cared for, appreciated and loved. Students, families, educators and members of the community work together as partners in education.

Hanson Principal Deanna Ashby said, "Mrs. Gooch has visited many historical locations and communicates her travel experiences with her students to bring education to life and to make history real for the students. She can transport children through their imaginations to far-away places."

David Wachtel, a professor at Bluegrass Community and Technical College and head of the Partnership of Chinese Exchange, coordinated Gooch's recent trip to China. He took a small group of people

to tour the country and teach at Changsha Education College. In exchange for teaching at the college, tour members received free housing.

Gooch taught the Chinese educators how to integrate English into their curricula. "We were their one-on-one contact to help them learn and improve their English skills," said Gooch.

"Her purpose for the trip was to share American teaching methods and techniques to assist others in making educational connections across the curriculum," continued Ashby. "It is an honor for Hanson Elementary to be represented by Mrs. Gooch in the global arena."

During the five-week trip, the group visited the cities of Beijing, Xi'an, Guilin, Hong Kong and Shanghai. They walked a section of the Great Wall, viewed the thousands of terra cotta sculptures of warriors at the burial site of an emperor of the Ch'in Dynasty and enjoyed a Li River cruise.

She also visited the countryside where water buffalo still are used to plant rice. She shopped in open markets where fresh fruit and vegetables are sold along with fish, snakes and other meats hanging from hooks in the open air.

Gooch is sharing experiences from the trip with her students this year. They are comparing and contrasting the elements of the two cultures — music, art, clothing, language, holidays and food. "I enjoyed seeing how their culture is similar, yet different, from ours," Gooch said.

In addition, Gooch often shares her experiences with educators in Hopkins County and throughout the state. She is a member of the Kentucky Council of Social Studies and the National Council for History Education. She also teaches an assessment class for Murray State University through Madisonville Community College.

Contact: Libby Gooch at Hanson Elementary, (270) 825-6158, lgooch@hopkins.k12.ky.us



Photo by Rick McComb

Students in Libby Gooch's fifth-grade class listen as she tells them about the cloisonné, or enamel work, vase that she bought when she visited China.

her own knowledge and depth of understanding, so that she can share these interesting experiences with her students and others, she said.

Gooch has taught 22 years, eight of which have been at Hanson Elementary. Hanson, a Pacesetter School, boasts a 104.7 Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) academic index. The school's social studies index, however, is 112.36. Principal Deanna Ashby noted that the high scores in social studies, which is assessed at fifth grade on the Kentucky Core Content Tests, could be credited to Gooch's approach to instructional strategies.

"I teach American history by integrating the curriculum using social studies as the foundation. I use reading, spelling, writing, economics, music, art and science when applicable," said Gooch.

"I believe a whole language approach

2006 American History Teacher of the Year Competition

The Kentucky Historical Society (KHS) is accepting nomination packages for the 2006 Preserve America History Teacher of the Year competition. KHS is the state coordinator for this award program, which is guided by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History at the national level. KHS will forward the Kentucky winner's nomination package to the nationwide contest. Kentucky's winner will receive a \$1,000 cash prize.

Those eligible include teachers at the middle and high school levels whose primary subject is American history or elementary teachers who focus on American history within the framework of their elementary school programs. Nominees must have at least three years of experience, demonstrate a deep career commitment to American history, and show evidence of creativity in the classroom through the use of documents, artifacts, and historic sites. For more information, go to http://history.ky.gov/Teachers/am_hist_teach.htm.

For information on how to apply, contact Rebecca Hanly at (502)564-1792, Ext.4475 or rebecca.hanly@ky.gov. Nomination packages must be postmarked by May 15.

CHINESE from Page 1

Kentucky. KVHS also plans to offer the online content to schools for teachers to use in their classrooms and perhaps to businesses that are interested in enrolling participants, DeYong said.

The course is built around eight units that have practical language application opportunities. They are: Greeting, Family, Friends, Time, Food and Clothes, Hobbies, Arts and Business. Each unit is comprised of a series of activities including podcasts, online activities, Web research and activities using the accompanying workbooks.

Each unit ends with a performance event where the student must demonstrate mastery of the standards presented in that unit. In addition to the written and reading portions, there are listening and spoken components to the course. The online teacher moderates the spoken component.

A cultural element is woven throughout all units. "This is not only a language course," Zhao explained. "Language is only a tool to learn more about the outside world. It is an important way to touch different cultures and different people."

Connecting with Kentucky

In addition to designing the online course, Zhao's other responsibility is to visit school districts to promote the course and Chinese language and culture.

Zhao already has visited schools in Hancock and Warren counties. During each visit, she shared with students her knowledge, photographs and authentic artifacts of the Chinese culture, including Tai Chi and the arts of seal cutting and calligraphy.

"I like to communicate with the students," Zhao said. "They are so eager and curious to know more about China and the Chinese culture."

In China, all students are required to study English, beginning in grade three. Students spend an average of 10 years studying English before they graduate from college, according to Zhao.

"Students there know they must learn English to be successful and get a good job," she said.

In contrast, the National School Boards Association reports that only an estimated 30,000 to 50,000 students in U.S. schools currently are studying Chinese, a language spoken worldwide by 1.4 billion people.

According to the Kentucky Department of Education, Wilder Elementary School and Atherton High School in Jefferson County are the only Kentucky public schools providing a Chinese language program on their campuses. Henry Clay High School students in Fayette County

can enroll in a dual credit Chinese language course at the Bluegrass Community and Technical College.

Educators now are realizing the prominent role that China plays in the future of economic development in the United States. The College Board reports that one in six jobs is tied to international trade and investment. American trade with

science and engineering has dropped by 12 percent in the last five years.

Zhao believes the heavy focus for Chinese students in science and engineering is due to the development level of China. "China is in its industry development stage," she said. "The people who have studied science and engineering can find good jobs. That is why both teachers

ers encourage their students to be more creative," she said.

As the importance of teaching the Chinese language in Kentucky schools becomes more apparent to educators, so does the problem — the lack of teachers able to teach the course. Department of Education consultants working with KVHS hope the new online course addresses this problem.

In time, KVHS plans to develop advanced courses that build on the lessons of this first Chinese language course. This eventually could prepare students for the new Advanced Placement course and examination in Chinese language and culture being offered by the College Board.

Department of Education staff also encourages school districts to participate in more teacher exchanges with China, like the department has with Zhao.

"Having Jane Zhao at KVHS is a wonderful opportunity to open students' eyes and minds to the culture and language of China, a rising world power and new economic trade partner with Kentucky," said Jacque Van Houten, the department's world language and international education consultant.

"Chinese is the most widely spoken first language in the world, and now all Kentucky students will have the chance to learn Chinese and be prepared for the flat-world future," she said.

If any district is interested in having a Chinese teacher or starting a Chinese program, contact Jacque Van Houten at (502) 564-2106 or jacqueline.vanhouten@education.ky.gov.

Students may register for the course online at www.kvhs.org. For more information about the course, call KVHS at (866) 432-0008.



Terri DeYong, Kentucky Department of Education senior consultant in the Division of Secondary and Virtual Learning, listens as visiting Chinese educator Jing (Jane) Zhao talks about the Chinese language course being developed for the Kentucky Virtual High School.

Asia has surpassed trade with Europe and now exceeds \$800 billion per year.

"Learning the Chinese language may give students more work opportunities in the future because there is more and more cooperation between China and the United States," Zhao said. She said she hopes more Kentucky school districts take an interest in the Chinese language and culture.

Differences in education

During her stay in the United States, Zhao would like to share information with American teachers about education in China. She hopes she can provide insight into how Chinese students are educated and why Chinese students pursue more careers in science and engineering.

"Because of the large population in China, class size there is larger than the average class size in America," Zhao said. "Therefore, the discipline of the classroom is very important." She said Chinese students have very strict and focused study customs.

Data show that 60 percent of the total college degrees earned in China are in science and engineering. In the United States last year, only 5 percent of degrees earned were in science and engineering.

This year, China will graduate 350,000 engineers. In contrast, U.S. enrollment in

and parents think highly of students who study science."

She believes the service industry is more important in the United States. "More American students are interested in the arts and humanities and business," she said.

Zhao also would like to gather information from American teachers to take back to China. "As a Chinese teacher, I would like to learn how American teach-



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GOVERNOR from Page 1

lish from Union College and a bachelor's in elementary education from Pikeville College.

She is a past member of the executive board for the Wilderness Road Girl Scout Council and has served as leader and service unit chair. Baird currently serves as a statewide member of the Presbyterian Homes and Services Board. She is chair of the Christian Education Committee for her church.

Brothers is the plant manager at Gates Corp. and formerly was a space flight engineer for Lockheed Missiles & Space Corp. He is the past president of the Kentucky School Boards Association and currently serves on the Elizabethtown Independent Board of Education.

He received a bachelor's degree in engineering from the University of Alabama. Brothers served on the U.S. Department of Education Appalachia Regional Advisory Committee. Brothers has received

numerous awards in the engineering and education fields.

Ferguson has served as an adjunct professor at Spalding University, Bellarmine University and Jefferson Community and Technical College since 1997. She previously taught communications at the University of Kentucky and Jefferson Community College.

She earned a bachelor's degree in English from Ursuline College in Louisville and a master's in communications from the University of Kentucky. She is a board member of the Louisville Deaf Oral School and the Louisville Theatrical Association.

Hubbard is an attorney in the firm of Fulton, Hubbard & Hubbard. He previously served as attorney for Bardstown Independent School District and as city attorney for the City of Bloomfield. He also volunteers as timekeeper for the Bardstown High School football team.

He earned a bachelor's degree in business at the University of Kentucky and a juris doctorate from the University of Kentucky College of Law. Hubbard is a member of the American Bar Association and the Bardstown Foundation for Excellence in Public Education.

Travis is vice-president of human resources for the Murray/Calloway County Hospital. He was a member and past chairman of the Marshall County Board of Education.

He graduated from North Marshall High School and earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Kentucky. He is a member of the Kentucky School Boards Association Board of Directors.

The new appointees join four at-large members who were appointed by Gov. Fletcher in January 2004 and confirmed by the House and Senate. They are Bonnie Freeman of Louisville, David Rhodes of

Mount Sterling, David Webb of Brownsville and Jana Vice of Richmond. Their terms will expire in April 2008.

The state board develops and adopts the regulations that govern Kentucky's 176 public school districts. While the board has legal authority to establish performance standards for local school districts and to mandate corrective actions, the board respects the local autonomy of each school district.

State board members receive a salary of \$100 per day when there is a quorum at the board meeting. They also receive actual reimbursement for expenses and travel.

The Kentucky Board of Education meets for two days every other month as set by state law. The board has three standing committees: management; curriculum, instruction and assessment; and internal audit. Special task forces and work groups are appointed as needed.

NEW from Page 1

missioner of Education Gene Wilhoit and Dale Brown, superintendent of Warren County Schools, started having discussions about what is important to teach in high school mathematics courses. Their collaboration brought together teachers from different districts to design diagnostic assessments in mathematics.

When educators from the five districts came together, they soon realized that they taught very different concepts in what were considered to be the same courses. Therefore, the ultimate goal of the group has been to create mathematics standards and end-of-course assessments and other diagnostic assessments that set consistent, rigorous performance standards across the state. These standards would set the bar for allowing students to demonstrate their understanding of skills and content, Upchurch said.

The group of mathematics teachers has met regularly since the fall of 2004 under the direction of Bill Bush, a professor and director of the Center for Research in Mathematics and Science Teacher Development at the University of Louisville. The teachers have written rubrics for the assessments they have created. Each course assessment consists of skill questions, concept questions, and reasoning and problem-solving questions. The group has scored the assessments and collected data on each question to ensure validity.

"Throughout the process, we have had many teachers, university mathematics professors and mathematicians review the assessments," said Jennifer Terry, a mathematics teacher at North Oldham Middle School who is involved in the group. "We have taken each comment and revised the questions so they would be both reliable and valid."

The diagnostic assessments can be used in a variety of ways. Portions of the assessments can be used at the end of a



East Jessamine High School mathematics teacher Angela Barber helps a student solve a problem in Geometry class. New diagnostic assessments developed by Kentucky educators will be available to help teachers individualize instruction for students in higher-level mathematics classes like Algebra I, Algebra II and Geometry.

unit to confirm the students have mastered content in that cluster. They also can be reconfigured for use in integrated and applied courses. However, teachers can use the assessments at their discretion.

"By having a statewide assessment of this type, we can begin to make sure the rigor of the course is the same throughout the state," Terry said.

Scores of the assessments would not be reported to compare one school to another. "We simply wanted to give teachers a tool to use so that both the students and the teachers can determine if a student has a common level of understanding," Terry

said.

Besides consistent standards, the assessments also provide immediate feedback. Using the assessments, teachers almost immediately can determine their next course of action with each student.

The assessments support the set standard and allow teachers to determine whether students are ready to move on to another class or the next level of learning. Students who meet the standards set by these assessments may move on to material that is appropriate for their next learning level. Some districts may give credit to students who meet the standards and allow them to move to a higher-level

class.

On the other hand, students who may need additional time to demonstrate learning can remain in the class while receiving continuous support.

"These students do not need to fail," Upchurch said. "When they meet the standards, they will receive credit for the class. Here, the emphasis is on the learning, not just grading."

The assessments are being field-tested and are due to be released to the public in May. These assessments will be made available to all districts and schools as one component of an aligned instructional resource system, along with curriculum maps, units of study and other tools for teachers and administrators.

The assessments will not be components of CATS or replace it, according to consultants at the Kentucky Department of Education. The department considers these resources as "wrap-around" support for classroom instruction.

"These assessments are another tool teachers can use to enhance student learning that is critical for postsecondary and the work force," said Kentucky Department of Education mathematics consultant Ann Bartosh.

The Kentucky Board of Education envisions these resources as ingredients for a performance-based education system. Decisions about if and how to use the assessments would be made at the local level and would not be included in the accountability index for a content area.

"We encourage teachers to use them," Terry said, "so they can have feedback on what their students know and understand."

Contact: Jennifer Terry, (502) 222-1451, jennifer.terry@Oldham.kyschools.us or Ann Bartosh, KDE mathematics consultant, (502) 564-2106, ann.bartosh@education.ky.gov

Photo by Rick McComb

Leadership Letter

Compiled by Joy Barr
joy.barr@education.ky.gov

Kentucky among states closing expectations gap

A report by Achieve Inc. charting the one-year progress of states to better prepare high school students to meet the demands of postsecondary studies and the work place has found that most states are following pledges to make high school more rigorous. Achieve Inc. is an organization created by the nation's governors and business leaders to support higher standards and achievement for all American students.

States are moving to close the gap between college and work force readiness according to the report, "Closing the Expectations Gap 2006." The report looks at what states have done since last year when governors from 45 states and education and business leaders held a National Education Summit on High Schools. The summit addressed concerns that too many students drop out of high school or graduate without being prepared to succeed in college, technical school and on the job.

One year ago, only two states — Arkansas and Texas — had graduation requirements considered rigorous enough to prepare high school students for college-level work. Since the summit, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, New York, Oklahoma and South Dakota have adopted stricter requirements, which include four years of rigorous English plus mathematics through at least Algebra II.

School council training available from KASC

Kentucky law requires that every newly elected school council member take six hours of training within 30 days of taking office. That training is available in a six-hour "Introduction to School-Based Decision Making (SBDM)" workshop. Experienced council members must complete three hours of additional training.

New council members receive information about budgeting, legal responsibilities, policy making, personnel issues, and meeting and records requirements. However, all workshops focus on the council's responsibility to determine instructional practices at their schools and to establish policies on how students will be taught.

This year, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) has contracted services through the Kentucky Association of School Councils (KASC) to develop and support the delivery system for council member training.

New information about school council training includes:

- A revised list of trainers — Those listed have preliminary endorsement and must complete a Trainers' Institute this spring. All are expected to receive final endorsement by mid-May. Schools may



Photo by Rick McComb

Seizing the opportunity

Carroll County High School Principal Curt Haun uses an assignment in Brett Miller's English class as an opportunity to talk with the senior and let him know that his success in school is important. Carroll County High and Carroll County Middle Schools are members of the Kentucky Secondary Alliance, which is focused on helping secondary schools improve the experience for their students so they are well prepared to transition to postsecondary studies and the work place.

engage anyone on the list to meet their training needs.

- Training topics — An updated curriculum will provide a range of opportunities for new and experienced school council members. The curriculum now includes descriptions of training workshops for members.

- Easy access — Both the new curriculum summary and the revised trainers list are available for easy download from www.kasc.net/SBDMtrainers.htm.

Online, interactive training for council members is available through the Kentucky Virtual High School (KVHS). Online training is designed to offer flexibility for new and experienced council members. A KDE-endorsed school council trainer and a consultant with the Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership facilitate the training. KVHS offers a group discount rate on basic council

training. For information about online training, go to www.kvhs.org.

For more information about the workshops, go to www.kasc.net.

KASA

The Kentucky Association of School Administrators (KASA) has scheduled its 37th annual conference July 19-21 at the Galt House Hotel in Louisville. "Extreme Leadership: Exceeding the Ordinary" is the theme.

www.kasa.org

Pike County district wins national award

The American Association of School Administrators has named the Pike County Schools' LIBERTY program one of 34 state Civic Star Award winners. The annual award is given for excellence in

school district/community partnerships that enrich student achievement and academics.

LIBERTY stands for Libraries Involve, Build and Energize Readers Transforming Youth. Pike County Schools implemented the program to encourage reading at all levels. District officials began with a \$350,000 federal grant to use on several literacy projects in the local schools.

The literacy projects have helped improve reading scores on state assessments throughout the district. In addition, libraries at the elementary schools were open extended hours to encourage reading. Computer equipment was updated in the libraries so community members could use the libraries for Internet access.

Another LIBERTY project was family reading nights, planned twice a month at each elementary school. Camp-Read-A-Lot events provided community volunteers to help students hone their reading skills.

Contact: Frank Welch, Pike County Schools superintendent, (606) 432-7724, fwelch@pike.k12.ky.us

INSIGHT pre-college experience June 4-10

The Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB) is working with several other organizations to plan, organize and provide a special weeklong, pre-college experience for students who are blind or visually impaired. Participating students must have completed the tenth or eleventh grade and have postsecondary education as part of their Individual Transition Plan (ITP)/ Individual Learning Plan (ILP). The program will be held on the campus of Morehead State University June 4-10.

"INSIGHT - Postsecondary Preparation Week" is designed to provide students with an increased awareness of the educational, recreational and social challenges of the postsecondary environment.

Components of the program include budgeting, time management, study skills, advocacy skills, orientation and mobility, and exploration of various assistive technologies. Students also will be exposed to other areas of independent living skills such as nutrition, hygiene, clothing care and recreational/leisure activities. Participating students will stay on campus in the university dormitories.

Big East Educational Cooperative, Kentucky Office for the Blind, Morehead State University and the University of Louisville are KSB's partners in the INSIGHT program.

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Swim instructor Dan Meade helps Hazelwood Elementary student Dominique Metcalfe become confident kicking the water as she stays afloat during a starfish program lesson.

Jefferson County students take to the water to learn

By Cathy Lindsey

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Students in Jefferson County are learning how to make a splash. School administrators and the Louisville Metro Government have seen to that by providing the Starfish Program, an instructional course in swimming and water safety for every second grader in the district.

Now in its fifth year, the Starfish Program includes a water-safety curriculum and four 45-minute swimming lessons during the school year. This year, nearly 7,000 students will participate in the program.

"Second-graders are the best age group for the program because they're old enough to understand safety measures and young enough to easily overcome their fears," said YMCA Program Coordinator Stephanie Dobbins.

Louisville YMCA pools are used for the program. Lessons also are given at the Mary T. Meagher Aquatic Center, the University of Louisville, the Shawnee High School Magnet Career Academy and the All About Kids Sports Center. Each elementary school is assigned to a pool based on location and availability of time and space.

"Our goal is to make the students feel safe and comfortable around the water while familiarizing them with water rules and techniques," said Dobbins.

Students wear float belts while the instructors assess each stu-

dents' skills. Students are then divided into smaller groups according to skill level. During their lessons, students learn the basics of swimming, such as kicking, floating and blowing bubbles in the water.

"Most of our students don't get a chance to go swimming," said Karen Waggoner, second-grade teacher at Hazelwood Elementary. "They don't have someone who can teach them these fundamentals."

Instructors, who are paid with a grant from the city, also talk with students about boating safety and the importance of life jackets. In addition, they perform rescue breathing demonstrations.

Parents must give permission for their child to participate. On days the students are scheduled for Starfish activities, they are asked to wear their swimsuits under their clothes. The Jefferson County Public Education Foundation provides swimsuits for students in need.

When a student completes all four lessons, he or she receives a certificate and skill sheet that describes in detail for parents their child's skill level – beginner, intermediate or advanced.

The Starfish Program also provides classroom teachers with a curriculum connection guide that relates the water safety program with core content in reading, writing, health and practical living. This allows teachers to tie classroom activities to the students' water experiences.

Karen Waggoner, second-grade teacher at Hazelwood Elementary, said she appreciates that the curriculum applies to real-life and is another curriculum tool she can use in the classroom.

The program helps students improve their coordination, concentration and listening skills. It has students applying skills being taught in the classroom.

Students stay focused and follow directions, she said.

"Even those who aren't as focused in the classroom are focused here because they're really interested," she added.

Stephen Daeschner, superintendent of Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS), worked



Buoyed by flotation devices, Royal Todd, a Hazelwood Elementary student, makes his way to the edge of the swimming pool under the guidance of instructor Flo Stoltz.

with the City of Louisville and pulled partners together to support the Starfish Program.

"It's a wonderful gift to have every second grader exposed to swimming," Daeschner said. "Not only does this program introduce students to another form of physical activity, it also

provides opportunities for reading and writing exercises and helps build self-esteem and confidence in our young students."

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